



Health Awareness

Take Small Steps To Lower Your Risk For Type 2 Diabetes

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(NAPSA)—As the number of Americans who are overweight has risen, so too has the number of people with or at risk for type 2 diabetes. Nearly 21 million adults currently have diabetes, and one-third of them are not yet diagnosed. Another 54 million adults have pre-diabetes, which puts them at an increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes. The serious, disabling complications of diabetes include heart attack, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, and lower limb amputations.

Two of the most common risk factors for type 2 diabetes are being overweight, as defined by a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher, and being age 45 or older. Having a family history of diabetes also increases your risk. If you had gestational diabetes when you were pregnant, you and your child have a lifelong risk of developing diabetes. Diabetes more often occurs among African Americans, Hispanics and Latinos, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Every day, over 4,000 people are diagnosed with diabetes. The good news is that the onset of type 2 diabetes can be delayed or prevented. The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) promotes the findings of a major National Institutes of Health study—the Diabetes Prevention



Diabetes has reached epidemic proportions in the U.S. However, small steps can be taken to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Program (DPP)—which found that modest weight loss can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes by more than half through gradual lifestyle changes in diet and physical activity. Making healthy food choices that are lower in fat and calories and being physically active most days of the week can be keys to weight loss, and in turn, preventing type 2 diabetes.

To reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes, work with your health care team to set an achievable weight loss goal, and then create a weight loss plan together. Make a commitment and write down your goals in small, realistic steps and time frames. For example, a good weight loss goal is to lose at least 5 to 7 percent of your current weight—that's 10 to 14 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds.

Keep track of your daily food intake and physical activity in a log book and review it every day.

Make healthy food choices such as fruits and vegetables, fish, lean meats, dry beans, whole grains, and low-fat or skim milk and cheese. Eat small portions, and choose water to drink.

To become more physically active:

- **Start off slowly.** If you are not active, start off with a physical activity for a few minutes on most days of the week. Slowly add more time until you reach at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity five days a week.

- **Build physical activity into your day.** Take a brisk walk during lunchtime. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park farther away from stores or your office.

- **Keep at it and invite your family to join you.** Healthy eating and physical activity help keep the whole family healthy. The longer you keep at it, the better you will feel. Celebrate small successes together.

As more Americans take these small steps to lower their risk for diabetes, we can reduce the devastating effects of this disease.

To get your free copy of NDEP's *Your GAME PLAN to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes* and more tips on how to lose weight to lower your risk of diabetes, contact NDEP at 1-800-438-5383 or www.ndep.nih.gov and click on the *Small Steps. Big Rewards. Prevent type 2 Diabetes.* campaign.